

What is claimed is:

1. A method of configuring a directory server comprising a plurality of entries, the  
5 method comprising the steps of:  
creating a CoS scheme, wherein the CoS scheme comprises  
a CoS Definition entry; and  
one or more CoS template entries.
- 10 2. The method of claim 1, wherein the CoS Definition entry has a CoS specifier and  
a value for the CoS specifier.
3. The method of claim 2, wherein the value of the CoS specifier in the CoS  
Definition entry appears in a target entry as a first attribute type.
- 15 4. The method of claim 3, wherein the value of the first attribute type corresponds to  
a relative distinguishing name (RDN) of a template associated with the CoS Definition  
entry.
- 20 5. The method of claim 1, wherein the CoS definition entry contains a list of  
attribute types, the values for which may be provided by the CoS scheme in said one or  
more CoS template entries.
6. A method of providing an attribute-value pair stored in a directory system and  
25 shared by a plurality of target entries in the directory system, the method comprising the  
steps of:  
creating a classic CoS scheme;  
receiving a request for an attribute-value pair associated with a first target entry;

searching in a list of attribute-value pairs which are associated with template entries that are in turn associated with CoS Definition entries for instances of attribute-value pairs that match the requested attribute type, said searching step resulting in a matched list of attribute-value pairs;

5       applying at least one of a set of constraints to the matched list of attribute-value pairs; and

          returning the attribute-value pair that satisfied the applied constraint(s).

7.       The method as in claim 6, wherein the set of constraints includes CoS scope.

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8.       The method as in claim 6, wherein the set of constraints includes determining if a cos specifier associated with the matched attribute-value pair matches a cos definition entry associated with the attribute-value pair.

15      9.       The method as in claim 6, wherein the set of constraints includes determining if a matched attribute-value pair corresponds to the RDN of a template associated with the CoS definition entry.

20      10.      An apparatus comprising:

          a directory server comprising:

              a component to configure and store a plurality of target entries; and

              a component to create a CoS scheme, wherein the CoS scheme comprises

                  a CoS Definition entry; and

                  one or more CoS template entries.

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11.      The apparatus of claim 10, wherein the CoS Definition entry has a CoS specifier and a value for the CoS specifier.

12. The apparatus of claim 11, wherein the value of the CoS specifier in the CoS Definition entry appears in a target entry as a first attribute type.
13. The apparatus of claim 12, wherein the value of the first attribute type  
5 corresponds to a relative distinguishing name (RDN) of a template associated with the CoS Definition entry.
14. The apparatus of claim 10, wherein the CoS definition entry contains a list of attribute types, the values for which may be provided by the CoS scheme in said one or  
10 more CoS template entries.
15. An apparatus comprising:  
a directory server comprising:  
a component configured to store a plurality of target entries;  
15 a component adapted to configure an attribute-value pair that could be shared by at least a subset of the plurality of target entries;  
a component configured to receive a request for an attribute-value pair associated with a first target entry;  
a component configured to search in a list of attribute-value pairs which  
20 are associated with template entries that are in turn associated with CoS Definition entries for instances of attribute-value pairs that match the requested attribute type, said searching step resulting in a matched list of attribute-value pairs;  
a component configured to apply at least one of a set of constraints to the matched list of attribute-value pairs to result in a selected attribute-value pair; and  
25 a component configured to return the selected attribute-value pair.
16. The apparatus as in claim 15, wherein the set of constraints includes CoS scope.

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